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Federal Clean Energy Investment Needed to Stimulate Economy and Create Green Collar Jobs

Maryland Energy Administration Director Testifies Before U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

WASHINGTON, DC (December 10, 2008) – Major new federal investments in clean energy should be a critical part of the Obama Administration's economic recovery package, according to Malcolm Woolf, director of the Maryland Energy Administration, in testimony today before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The Committee, chaired by New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman, is evaluating potential clean energy and natural resources investments. Director Woolf testified on behalf of the National Association of State Energy Officials about the steps the federal government can take to accelerate energy solutions and help address the nation's most pressing financial challenges.

"It is hard to overestimate the promise of clean energy," Director Woolf told the Committee members. "Like roads and bridges, energy investments immediately create new jobs ranging from attic insulators to solar installers. Such jobs can't be outsourced overseas. And these investments will continue to pay dividends in the years to come by reducing our monthly energy bills, increasing generation of clean, renewable power, and accelerating our nation's transition to a more sustainable and secure energy future."

Woolf specifically called on Congress to launch a \$10 billion energy efficiency building retrofit program to minimize the amount of energy that literally goes out the window (or air duct), to fund a program to directly assist municipal energy efficiency and renewable projects, to expand proven programs, and to provide targeted tax incentives.

The recommendations are based on Maryland's track record of leading progressive energy policy and green collar workforce development. Under Governor O'Malley, Maryland enacted a sweeping host of clean energy initiatives, including one of the most ambitious energy efficiency goals, designed to reduce Marylanders' bills and strengthen the economy through job creation.

Director Woolf urged the committee to invest in clean energy and the states, proclaiming "The states are uniquely positioned to jump start real world energy projects in weeks, not seasons. I strongly urge Congress to leverage the federal government's resources with state's ability to innovate and quickly implement energy projects on the ground."

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